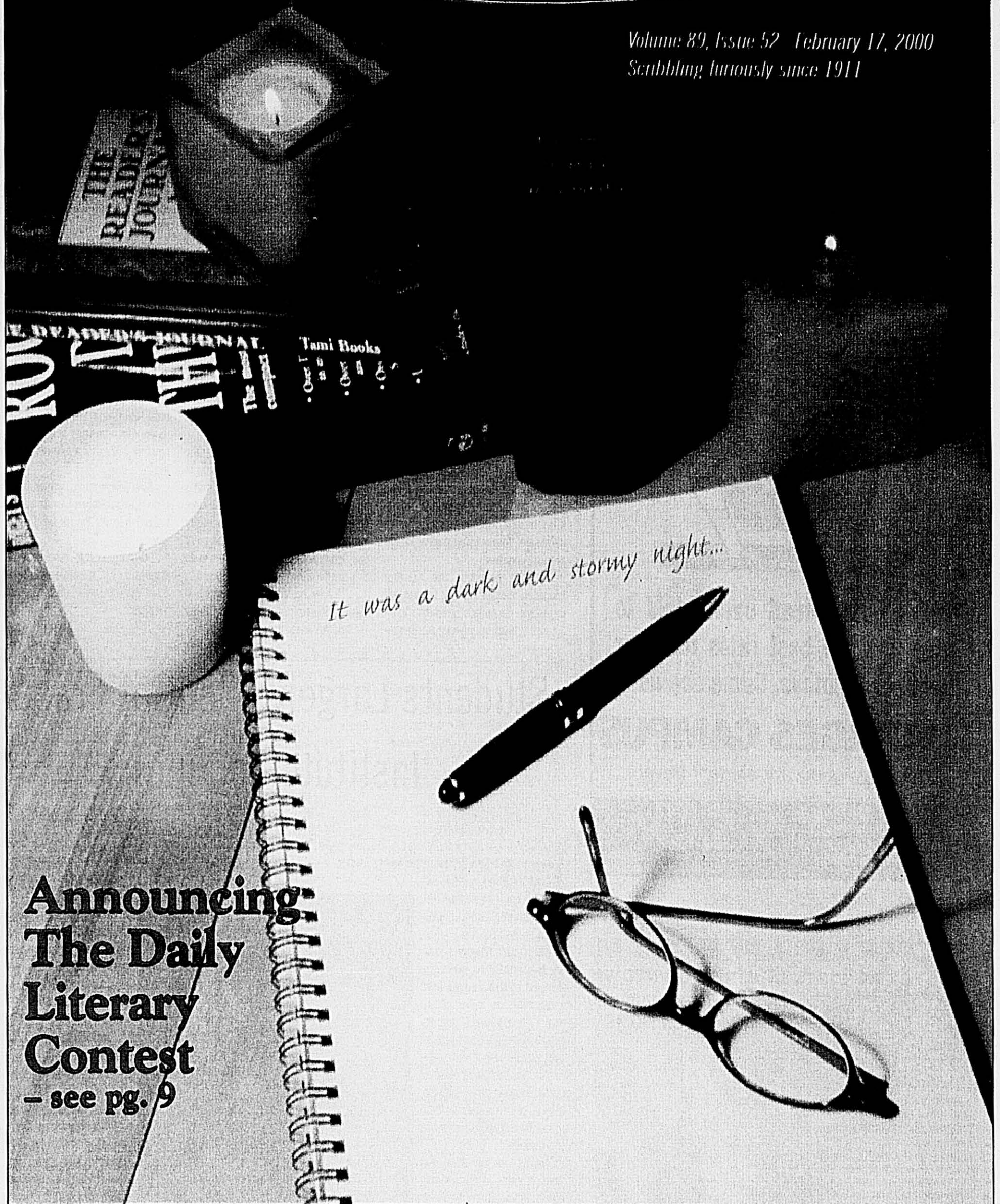


# THE MCGILL DAILY

Volume 89, Issue 52 February 17, 2000  
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- see pg. 9

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*SSMU elections kick off today -pg. 3*

**CULTURE –**

*Crystal meth, coke, and raving - pg. 16*



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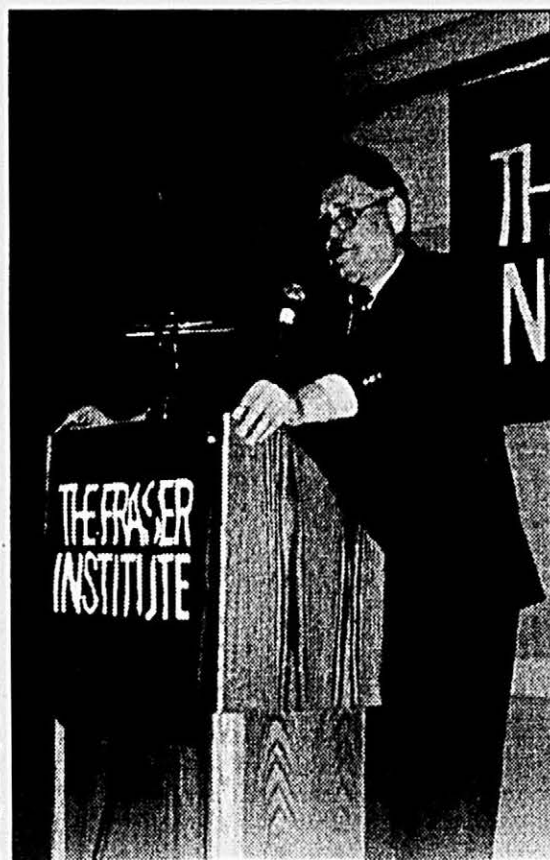
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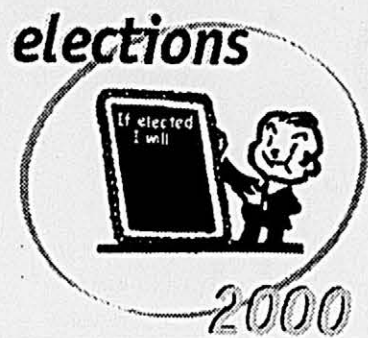
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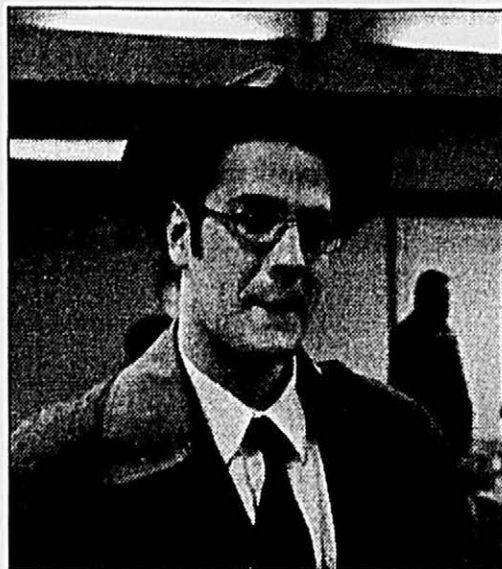
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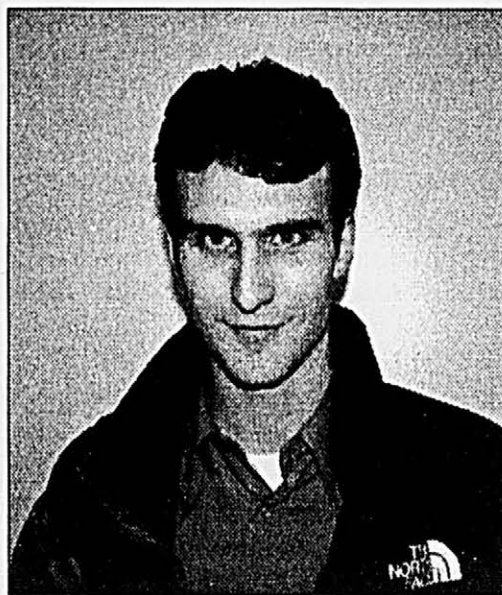
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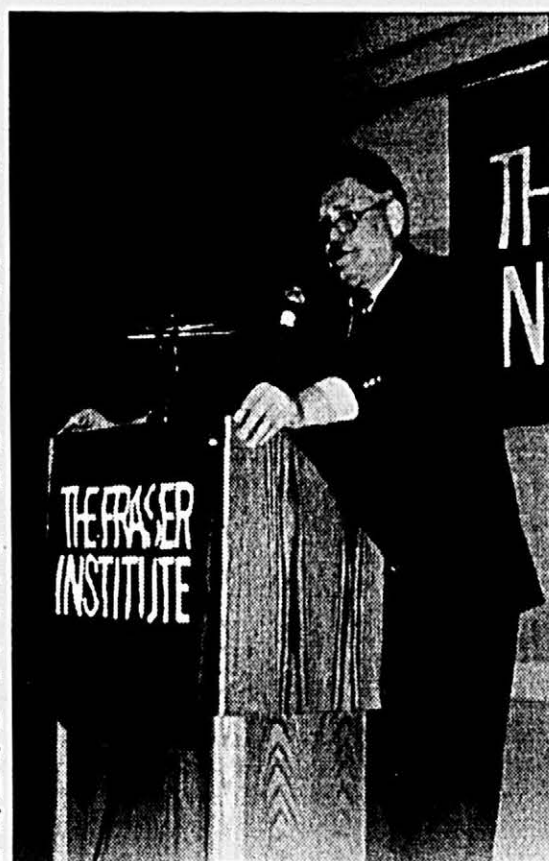
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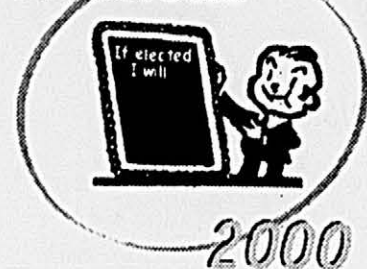
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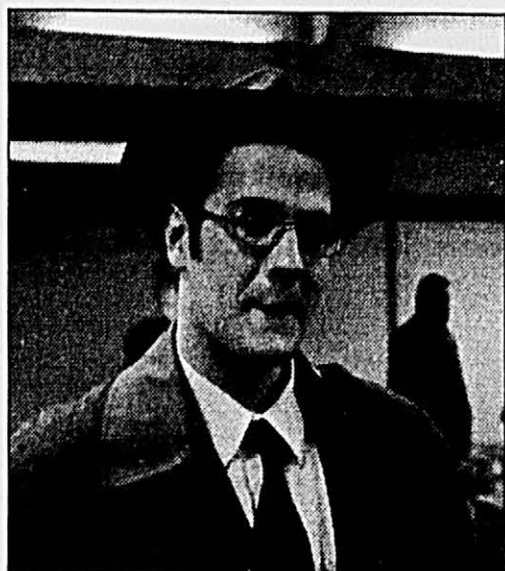
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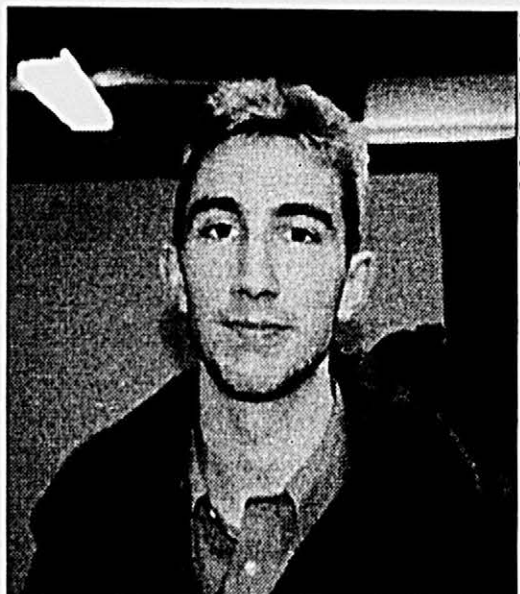
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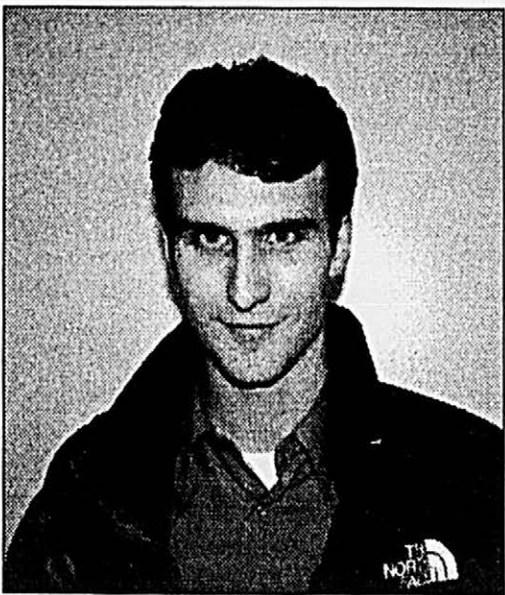
Presidential hopeful Romulo Severino

a sense of what day-to-day student life is really like, with impressive experience and a CV that includes four years of SSMU council experience, roles on a host of council committees, and a longtime role in RVC residence where she is a Floor Fellow and Assistant Director.

She also pointed to what she called a string of failures on SSMU's part to spend new student fees to get projects like the MSF bursary program and the daycare off the ground. Kochar identified among her goals improving SSMU-Faculty Association relations, investment in the library, and peer advising reforms.

Baraniak meanwhile, stressed the value of his experience this year on the SSMU executive. "Come the first of May, I'm the one who can enter office and know what's going on," he said. "Experience is the key."

He pointed to goals for increased transparency in council's financial matters, increasing on-line student services, and making the Shatner building more



VP Community and Government Affairs wannabe Louis-Philippe Messier

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# Obsession With the Mob

*Professor Fred Gardaphe explores the mafia's relationship to men and their morals*

BY MICHELLE DEAN

From *The Godfather* to *The Sopranos*, mafia culture has become a hallmark of American pop culture, according to Professor Fred Gardaphe of the State University of New York at Stony Brook at a talk on Tuesday at McGill.

Gardaphe gave an entertaining talk entitled "The Gangster: From Ancient Archetype to Modern Trickster, or Why American Culture is Obsessed With the Mafia."

Gardaphe, one of only three professors of Italian-American studies in the world, argued that the mafia represents "a roadmap of sorts for American masculinity."

The SUNY professor began by tracing the mafia motif not back to America, or even Sicily, but to Greece, where the gangster tradition finds a close link with Greek mythology which tells the story of Hermes, the messenger-god who stole his brother's cattle in an effort to increase his status among the Olympians.

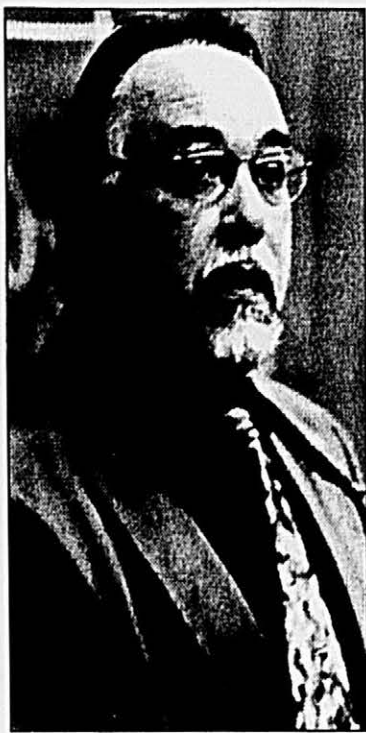
"Hermes became a champion for equality through the acquisition of what

the ruling class has," said Gardaphe. That lent him the air of a "trickster" and presented thievery as an attempt at social mobility outside the realm of accepted behaviour, a practice at once both condemned and admired in "proper" society.

Gardaphe went on to expound on the gangster figure's role in American culture more directly.

"In the moral fanaticism of American-based culture," he explained, "good and evil were separated, and as man strived towards his notion of pure good, he had to be able to measure his progress by personifying pure evil in others." The gangster, he continued, became the "other" against which American men defined and determined their own behaviour.

He spoke too of America's beloved fictional men. The godfather, for example, can be called a remnant of primitive Southern Italian culture that disappeared for hundreds of years, only resurfacing in the Little Italies of New York. Truly then, sensationalised, modern gangster epics in tradition of Francis Coppola's well-known saga do contain grains of truth.



Professor Gardaphe spoke at Leacock on Tuesday

"Poets do not make ethnic myths, they simply record, in poetical or allegorical form, the history of their people," he noted.

He also took the opportunity to delve deeper into two hallmarks of mafia culture in America, *The Godfather* and *The Sopranos*.

*The Godfather*, according to Gardaphe, emphasized the deific qualities of the mafia, especially the elderly Don Corleone of Marlon Brando fame. The mafia is seen as a "natural force in the Sicilian world," said Gardaphe, noting also the film's reception by the Italian-American community who thought it supported ethnic discrimination.

By contrast, *The Sopranos* can be seen as hailing a new era of American culture. Gardaphe argued that the film is fundamentally about "the emasculation of the traditional male, who has been featured in even the most American films starring jewels such as John Wayne."

Tony Soprano, who has been forced to break the code of silence surrounding the traditional mafia by talking to a psychiatrist about his haunting experiences, becomes representative of the end of patriarchal codes.

"The old world gangster is unequipped

to cope with the intellectual and emotional demands of a post-modern world, in which the power of those who have control over information and knowledge rivals those who have physical muscle," concluded Professor Gardaphe.

The Italian-American studies professor, one of only three around the world, also addressed a host of audience questions touching on themes ranging from homoeroticism's role in the narcissistic world of the mafia, where dress and personal appearance are portrayed as almost important as achievements, to the symbiotic relationship between the mafia and the government, who tend to grow in proportion to each other's weakness.

Another spectator also asked the important question of why Italians were chosen as the gangster archetype in culture when the mafia tradition in the real world extended to many other ethnic groups.

"The Italian family represents a communal form of living that is the antithesis of the individualism of American society," mused Professor Gardaphe.

## Teaching Science to the Ignorant Masses

*Science journalist Jay Ingram talks about the difficulties of reporting on science for television*

### What is McGill Student Pugwash?

Pugwash is the name of a small town in Nova Scotia that was the site of a conference in 1957 attended by many prominent academics of the day including Albert Einstein and Bertrand Russell. The scholars signed a manifesto calling for all scientists of the world to engage in a discussion of their roles and responsibilities in the arms race.

That initial meeting led to the creation of the Pugwash Conferences of Science and World Affairs. This Nobel Prize winning international organization promotes the responsible use of science and technology with an emphasis on nuclear disarmament. McGill Student Pugwash is the only Canadian student chapter of this group.

In addition to organizing conferences and lectures, McGill Student Pugwash meets on a weekly basis for discussions on current topics involving science and society. The meetings take place on Mondays at 6:30 pm in Burnside Hall rm. 305 and new members are welcome.

BY JOE MARIN

Talking about science in the popular media is hard when the general public are scientifically illiterate, according to renowned science writer and broadcaster Jay Ingram last Saturday at McGill.

Ingram delivered the keynote address at the McGill Student Pugwash conference on science and the media that took place in the McIntyre Medical building.

The conference went by the whimsical title "Peanut Butter Causes Cancer: Science, Media and Popular Delusions." The day long event involved speakers, workshops and a panel discussion each focusing on the challenges inherent in communicating complex scientific issues to the general public.

Ingram was the host of the CBC Radio science program Quirks and Quarks between 1979 and 1992 before joining the Discovery Channel on cable television. He is now co-host and producer of @discovery.ca, the only daily, hour-long, prime-time science news program in the world.

The main focus of Ingram's talk was the challenges and dangers of communicating science through the medium of television. He began by encouraging the audience to be very skeptical about anything they see on TV.

"Contrary to what you might expect, this is not going to be a talk promoting television as the medium for science," he said.

Ingram believes that the most serious obstacle preventing the effective communication of science is the widespread scientific illiteracy of the public. He presented the

results of a discovery channel survey which found that while 85 per cent of North Americans know that the earth orbits the sun, only 50 per cent know that this takes around 365 days and just 53 per cent realize that humans and dinosaurs never shared the earth.

"This means that one out of every two people you meet thinks that the dinosaurs walked the earth at the same time as people," he said. "This is the audience."

The lack of a base of scientific knowledge on the part of the viewers means that a television program must devote a lot of time to providing background information before a story can be told. Ingram explained that as much as half of a 6 minute science story can be spent giving background.

"There has to be some kind of context so that they know what the hell you're talking about," said Ingram.

"In the medium of conversation you're aided by the blank looks on the faces of the people you're talking to which we don't have in television. We just assume they're all blank."

To put the issue of context into perspective, Ingram used the example of the plight of the financially troubled Ottawa Senators hockey team.

"In reporting that story, there was no need to supply a context, no-one had to explain what the NHL was. If that were a science story we'd have to be saying, 'now remember, here's what hockey is, and here is the NHL, that's a subsection of hockey where people get paid to play.' It'd be ridiculous."

Ingram admitted that many science

stories are compromised because so much background is needed.

"Much of modern science will never appear on our show, it's just too far down the context line."

A large part of the talk dealt with storytelling techniques which are unique to the medium of television and have an impact on the way that the audience perceives scientific subject matter.

To survive in the 60-channel universe of cable TV, a program must catch the eye of a channel surfer and make them want to watch.

"The visual is everything in television," said Ingram.

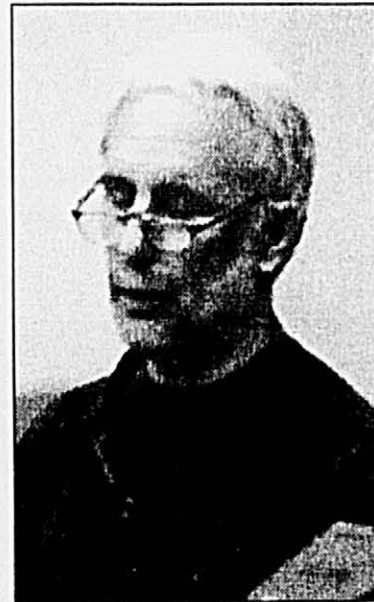
To illustrate his point, Ingram presented several clips from @discovery.ca that were examples of stories well suited to TV. One of them was an excerpt from a piece called, "Killer Dolphins", which was the lead story on the highest rated show in the history of the program. It consisted of amateur video footage of a bottlenose dolphin attacking a small harbour porpoise.

"Stories like 'Killer Dolphins' are perfect for television," he said, "when you have the pictures."

Ingram believes that one of the consequences of telling a "slightly sensational" science story in a visual way is that the human mind is misled by the convincing imagery and tends not to think critically about the information being presented.

"I think there's an unequal competition going on in the human brain, when a visual image and the spoken word are presented simultaneously," he said.

Because of the need to tell stories visu-



Mayla Gower

*Jay Ingram warns against sensationalizing science news*

ally, certain subjects are not well suited to television. Ingram gave the example of the Big Bang which, though it is an intriguing subject, can only be explained in words since no images of the event can possibly exist.

During the question and answer period following the presentation, Ingram was asked if TV programs like his own encouraged ignorance.

"Let's say we put on some images from the hubble telescope of storms on the planet Uranus," he responded. "How are we encouraging ignorance by doing this?"

Another audience member asked what responsibility a science student has to promote public understanding.

Ingram replied, "If you can convince people that it's possible to love nature, then I think you've accomplished a lot."



# CBA Question: This Time, It's the Real Thing

*CRO rules that Council's question is unclear, pro-CBA faction gets "yes" campaign*

BY JAIME KIRZNER-ROBERTS AND JON BRICKER

SSMU Chief Returning Officer Paul Flicker rejected SSMU Council's amended referendum question on the Cold Beverage Agreement Monday, calling it confusing and unclear.

The decision to reject the question comes after weeks of negotiations between the Students' Society and a group of students that put forward its own question on the agreement.

A Council-amended question submitted last Thursday represented a compromise between the two sides, but Flicker's decision this week ruled out the question as well as the student-initiated question, leaving only the first Council-initiated question on the table.

Students will vote next month on a question that asks, "Do you authorize the Students' Society of McGill University to enter into a long-term campus-wide cold beverage agreement?"

Flicker conceded that his decision to reject the students' question was not optimal, but he also said the compromise question was not a clear one. "The election co-ordinators said that it was an unclear amended question....I saw definite problems with overruling a student-initiated question, but running a referendum is a costly and time-consuming endeavour for the Society, and I believe it's optimal to get the clearest result."

He added that the student-initiated question touched on the Students' Society's financial dealings, which can't be put to referendum in a student-initiated question.

But François Tanguay-Renaud, Law Students' Association representative on SSMU and a leader of the anti-CBA forces

as well as the student-initiated question campaign, says he was outraged by Flicker's decision this week.

"I'm furious with him right now," said Tanguay-Renaud, pointing to Flicker's initial approval of the student-initiated question three weeks ago. "It's unacceptable that the CRO makes a judgement and then goes back on it....Why would he now change his mind after the deadline passed?"

SSMU President Andrew Tischler is pleased with Flicker's decision. Tischler has maintained all along that both the student-initiated question and the amended Council-initiated question would confuse students, and would not give the Students' Society a clear mandate.

He called the first Council-initiated question, which was upheld this week, a fairer question. "And fairness, in terms of the question itself, is the goal here," Tischler said. "It's the best question students can possibly have on the issue."

Tischler said the compromise question agreed on in Council last Thursday was slanted and strategically drafted, so that those opposed to the CBA could run a "yes" campaign. The question read, "Do you oppose the SSMU's participation in a campus-wide exclusive Cold Beverage Agreement?"

"The question was a negative question, so if you felt 'yes' you voted 'no,' which is really odd and not in the best interests of the electorate," Tischler said.

"But I think the students had tremendous success," he added. "They sought a referendum on the issue and they got one. It's a success for them. They wanted to give students an opportunity to choose on the CBA, and that's what they'll get."

"This smells of patronage," rebutted Tanguay-Renaud, adding that the question that now stands is at least as biased as the one voted on last week. "There's a problem with how the SSMU referendum process works."

But he says the anti-CBA forces have no plans to challenge Monday's ruling and further bog down the real issue with procedural concerns. "What needs to happen now is the real debate."

And while he feels let down by the process to date, he says he remains confident that next month's referendum will reveal strong student opposition to the Coke exclusivity deal.

"A third of students have already taken a stand against it and one thousand more have signed a petition to take it to referendum," he said, referring to the Post-Graduate Student Society, which has refused to participate in a deal from the get-go, and the hundreds of students who signed petitions to endorse the student-initiated question.

"This is only part of the campaign," Tanguay-Renaud added, referring to ongoing plans for poster campaigns, petitions, and a visit to McGill from Naomi Klein, Canadian author of the recent book *No Logo*.

Debate this week also surrounded early campaigning by the SSMU and anti-CBA forces. Flicker took issue with a recent expensive ad campaign by SSMU, as well as a kiosk set up in the Leacock building by the CBA opponents, both before campaigning is supposed to begin. Following negoti-

ation Monday, the two sides agreed on terms for the remainder of the campaign, but a PGSS ad campaign that began Tuesday caused further problems.

Flicker asked PGSS to stop the campaign and said that an ad placed this week would count against the anti-CBA campaign's advertising budget.

But Tanguay-

Renaud questioned Flicker's effort, noting the PGSS campaign was being run independently and not in conjunction with the other anti-CBA campaign.

"PGSS can run whatever ads they want. There's no reason the undergrads should be penalized for the actions of third parties."





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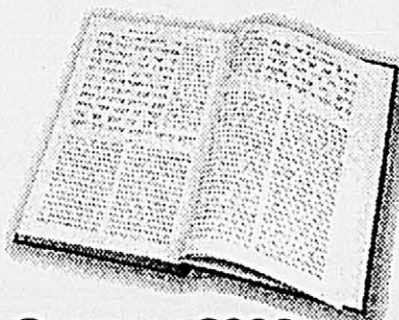
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letters



PINCHEVSKY A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

It was a refreshing change to read Tal Pinchevsky's article about the US-initiated crackdown on international terrorism ("Security or Witch-hunt?" February 3).

The mainstream media are salivating over wild theories about how the "bad" Arabs and so-called Islamic fundamentalists are roaming the world with dynamite in suitcases to blow up anything and everything that comes their way.

The fact of the matter is that no solid evidence has been produced so far to convict the "bad guys."

Abdul Hamid  
Arts U2

RELIGIOUS MESSAGE MISLEADING

While at the Currie Gym the other day, I came across a poster promoting an upcoming inspirational speech by a Montreal Alouettes football player. The event, which was scheduled to take place at the gym, was sponsored by an innocuous sounding group called "Athletes in Action."

I thought nothing about the poster until I entered the change room, and was met by a larger, handwritten poster taped to the wall. Curious, I decided to find out more about "Athletes in Action" by running a query on an Internet search engine. I quickly discovered that "Athletes in Action" is a missionary Christian group which targets athletes at both the professional and amateur levels.

The posters advertising the speech at the Currie Gym did not indicate that the event was being run by a missionary Christian group intent on promoting its agenda. I fear that many unsuspecting students might have been tricked into attending this event without realizing the organizers' intent to propagate their Christian views.

In the future, the Athletics administration should take care to ensure that posters promoting such events are accurately labelled. The failure of the event organizers to acknowledge their missionary agenda only leads me to believe that they imagined - perhaps quite accurately - that fewer students would attend if the true

nature of the speech were known. In Quebec society, where atheism, new age beliefs, and perhaps even the sovereignty movement have replaced the dogmatic role of the Christian Church, one almost feels sorry for the uphill battle facing anyone trying to promote Christianity.

Unfortunately, Athletes in Action's "inadvertent" omission of its true identity and underlying motive only serves to diminish its credibility. Religious groups on campus have the potential to greatly enrich student life at McGill. However, students should be provided with the necessary information to make informed choices.

Jonathan Herland  
U4 Law

GM FOODS NOT A SOLUTION

Maria Pontes Ferreira's argument that foods which are genetically modified to be of more nutritional value will remedy the problem of malnutrition in the Third World is predicated on the misconception that famine and malnutrition are technological, rather than political problems ("GM Food Opponents Should Consider Nutritional Benefits," February 10).

The majority of peoples in the pre-colonial era managed to feed themselves and might do so now, were this the "post-colonial" rather than the "neo-colonial" era. Yet, due to our global (read "neo-colonial") economy, nine out of 10 African countries requesting food aid in 1983 were net exporters of agricultural goods.

Solving the hunger problem in the Third World means allowing peasants to eat the food they grow.

GM foods will never feed the world because "the masses" will be forced to export their GM crops just so they can afford the very expensive seeds which are somehow supposed to solve their problems. Since these new seeds will be patented and the patents enforced by the WTO, it will be illegal for rice farmers to save seed as they have done for millennia, forcing dependence on monopolistic agribusiness companies who are far more interested in their own profit margins than in ending world hunger.

GM agriculture facilitates the privatization of life, which can only exacerbate, rather than end, malnutrition and famine.

Stephen Bentley  
U2

SFBM WANTS TO EXCLUDE US

Having read The Daily over the past few weeks, I have had the opportunity to notice the controversy surrounding the universi-



Your forum for all the latest campus scoops

Even though break starts in less than 48 hours, the SSMU 2000 elections officially kick off today. Slibel is still not really sure why that is, but the rumours are flying fast and furious...Clara Peron, significant other of current VP University Affairs Xavier Van Chau, is running for, you guessed it, VP University Affairs. It's a big turtleneck to fill, but Slibel's sure she can do it. Slibel heard some nasty gossip that Xavier's goldfish was also running for the position, forcing the neckwear enthusiast to make a tough decision. We doubt this is true, but wouldn't it be funny if it was?...Apparently the Artist formerly known as Tischie was paid a visit by The Dark Lord of The Underworld because of some disparaging comments Tischie made last week in The Daily. The Tischeroni told The Daily's intrepid reporter that his administration's bungling of the constitution was a result of being "dealt a bad hand." Our newshound took this to mean that Tisch was dealt a bad hand with regards to the constitution by previous executives. But no, T-dog says, that's not what he meant. Apparently, it was just a general complaint, not directed at anyone in particular, and of course not The Dark Lord. Whether this will spare him more beatings is uncertain...Current VP Snazzy Posters Matt Wyndowe is

going unchallenged for the student spot on the Board of Governors, which means that this position will be open to more candidates. Granted, Matt has always been courteous and polite to Slibel, has never referred to any Daily staffers as any sort of bloodsuckers or parasites, and has generally done his job competently. However, The Daily fears for little Matt in a room full of big bad Boggies...Slibel hears that Jörg Haider was spotted at La Belle Province chowing down on good ol' Quebecois poutine. No word on whether fries, gravy and cheese curds will be permitted in that whole Fourth Reich thing he's working on over there in Austria.

Send your election slibel to slibel\_lander@hotmail.com.



**On Track:** Desmond Tutu, for receiving an honorary degree from University of Toronto. Hey, maybe he's the kind of guy who actually deserves an honorary degree? You think? Nah!

**On Crack:** Education Minister François Legault chokes up on funding for just about everyone who asked.

ty's desire to increase its visibility in CEGEPs to attract Quebec students.

This project has met with criticism, especially from Mr. Jesse Rickard, from Students for a Better McGill. Mr. Rickard claims that such a policy would lead to a decline in the university's admission standards.

It seems to me, however, that Mr. Rickard is more capable of building far-fetched and improbable conspiracy theories involving the evil separatist Quebec government than of hiding his real goal driving his opposition to McGill's proposal.

Mr. Rickard's group has recently put leaflets on billboards across campus expressing its desire to "make McGill private," which leads me to see Mr. Rickard's opposition as part of a broader scheme to

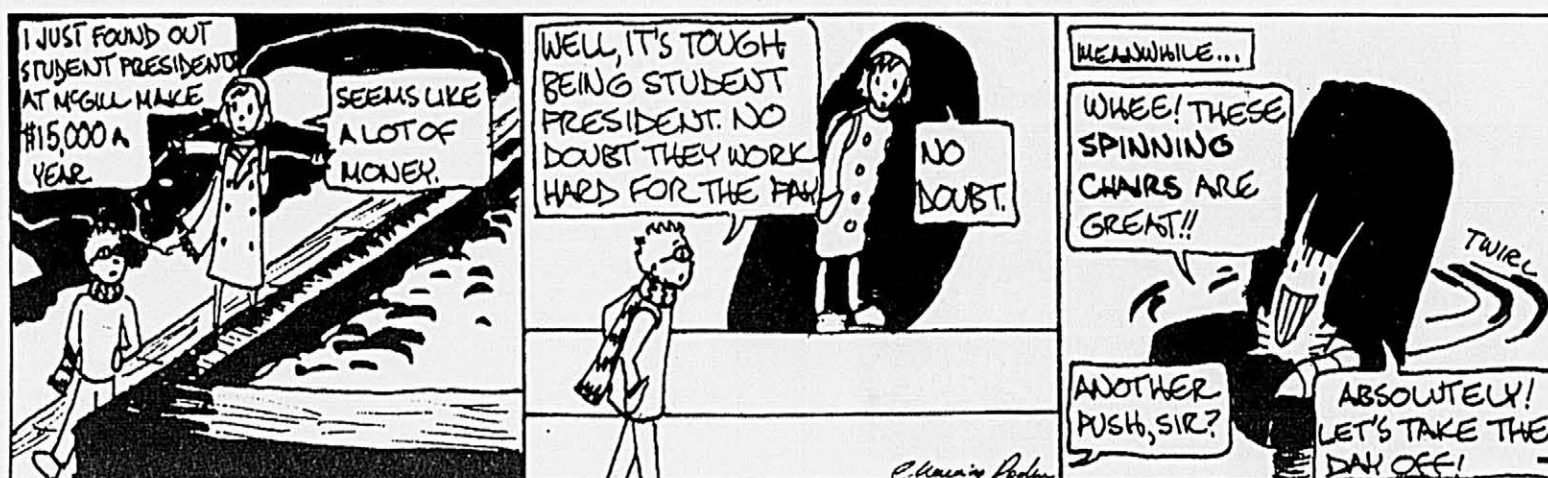
get rid of most Quebec students and fill the places with high-paying international students. He knows very well that in the event that McGill privatizes most Quebec students will have less expensive options available at other universities, and therefore will study elsewhere.

Students for a Better McGill have no place for Quebec students in their scheme. Mr. Rickard should be honest about it.

Students for a Better McGill's opposition to McGill's plan is not a matter of equality of opportunity as Mr. Rickard claims it is; it's the first step towards the exclusion of those who, obviously, cannot or do not want to pay more than they do now.

Alexandre Paquin  
U3 History - Political Science

APATHY RALLY by Channing Rodman







## Have Your Cake

I went shopping for food the other day.

Actually I went shopping for junk. But it makes me feel better to say that it was food.

I bought this cake-like object, made by a fine Canadian corporation. On the outside it said, "Tastes like cake and ice cream." And I wondered to myself, if it is cake and ice cream, isn't it supposed to taste like cake and ice cream? Why do they have to say what it will taste like?

This made me think. If a food as simple as an ice cream cake is not what it seems, why shouldn't we be afraid of all the odd genetically modified foods that you kids are so upset about?

(I have to report that the food did indeed "taste like cake and ice cream.")

This reminds me of a product I once sampled. It was frozen fast food that you microwaved. You bought a kit that contained a cheese burger, fries, and a milkshake. You popped the whole thing into the microwave and then ate it. It made me wonder at the time, "Just who are these people who are so busy that they can't even spare the time to go out to get fast food?"

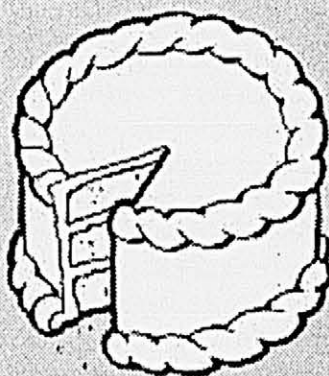
At the time, this worried me, but I was younger then. Now I don't care. I actually embrace this sort of foolishness.

My idea of a utopia would be a place where every time you felt hungry, you could get up off the couch, fetch yourself some high-fat, low-quality, yet tasty snack from the freezer, and then pop it into the microwave.

This would be good. The only way it could be better is if the food was brought to your door by someone who stayed around long enough to do the dishes.

On that happy note, I must be off - to eat. I plan on eating some food with no real nutritional value from a restaurant that has questionable environmental policies.

And as a postmodern man, I will enjoy it completely.



# CBA Secrecy Worrisome



BY MATHIEU ALLAIRE

The CBA agreement has been both bashed and defended by a whole lot of people. And Lord knows we are getting tired of the "We need the money" versus "Coke is evil" discussion.

However, most arguments for and against the CBA are not as direct as they could be. Here my aim is to try to explain why I am against the CBA, but by using two very simple and - I hope - evident reasons. Those reasons do not depend on the contents of the agreement, but are rather centred on the behaviour of the parties involved.

First reason: the SSMU tried to hide it from us. Politicians (I dare add political students) play a game of "hide the proce-

dures" when either a) they are screwing us royally, or b) have already screwed up royally. In both cases, it's to our disadvantage. Last year, the situation was clearly in a), but thanks to the pressure from student groups it has now evolved in b).

A basic notion of democracy concerning elected members is that it is never right to hide information from the people you are supposed to represent. To me, a politician saying, "People don't need to know all the details" is the equivalent of the dentist saying, "This won't hurt a bit" or of my folks' redundant "Eat your damn vegetables or you won't grow." People want to know the whole truth, not the candy truth. Manoeuvring in the shadows usually gets elected officials in serious trouble (e.g. Jane Stewart). Yet it seems no one learns the lesson. Which means that there still is a lot of stuff going on that we don't know about and that's profitable to our dear leaders.

Second reason: Coca-Cola is a company. I'm not saying they're the devil or anything, but let's face it: their goal is making money. Now, if Coke were an altruistic institution devoted to the betterment of

human rights worldwide, I'd be the first to welcome them with open arms and a kiss on the cheek. But they're not. They wouldn't make a deal if it weren't to their own advantage. And their advantage, being money, will come straight from our own student pockets. I have read examples of what happened to other universities that signed such deals (increase in advertisement and vending machines, renewal of the deal for free if the market doesn't increase by a certain percentage, etc.) Why should it be different this time? Just ask Zachsky what the effects are of giving a monopoly to an entity, be it an individual or a company.

There always are alternatives. An especially interesting one was stated in Toby Heaps' article in the Daily's edition of February 14. In his article entitled "Road To Hell Paved With Good Intentions," he proposes that tuition fees be drastically lowered, but that working graduated students pay a fraction of their salary to the university (an idea originally from James Tobin). Gratitude. Here's a word you don't hear often these days.

## CAMPUS EYE by Pierre-Alain Parfond



20 years ago: The Daily reported that McGill's service workers launched an unlimited strike. The union took action after a year of unfruitful negotiations on grievance procedures, sub-contracting of jobs, job definition, and workloads. Over 400 workers walked out, affecting the residence cafeterias, maintenance, the computer centre and university mail.

40 years ago: The Daily reported that Quebec Premier Barrette invited McGill Principal Cyril James to a meeting at which the premier explained a new plan by which Quebec universities would obtain a \$25-million backlog of Federal grants. Quebec universities had rejected Federal grants since 1953 on the grounds that education was under the exclusive jurisdiction of the provincial government.

60 years ago: The Daily reported that as a result of a petition signed by 25 students, the Students' Society would meet to discuss the activities of the Canadian Student Assembly at McGill. The students who signed the petition were concerned about CSA's involvement at McGill and wanted to dissociate the school's name from the organization.

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## MERELY MUSING



ZACHSKY

## And Eat It Too

A patient at a downtown Toronto hospital goes crazy, threatens a doctor with a fake gun, and is shot to death by police. The Prime Minister personally allocates \$200,000 for a water fountain to be built in his home riding of Shawinigan - a fountain his constituents never even asked for.

The media go wild.

Granted, shootings at hospitals are rare, but the story behind the outburst of Henry Musaka and his death at the hands of Toronto police was approached from a different angle: cutbacks to health care in Ontario and Quebec have so severely undermined the promptness of emergency service in hospitals that patients go crazy waiting hours for service.

The Toronto and Montreal media are literally obsessed with emergency room crowding. But despite what the reporters say and write, the "Emergency Room Crisis" has been an annual event for 12 years (trust me, I've got inside connections). It's just that now, for some reason, the media have decided to make it big - features, special online forums, and top-of-the-line stories week after snowy week.

The same thing's happened with the Human Resources Development Canada "scandal." Suddenly, someone caught on to the fact that federal ministers - PM Chrétien included - spend public money on questionable "development" projects in their own ridings (and here at McGill). The media cried out in shock, fury, and dismay. How could the Liberals so frivolously squander taxpayer's money?

Time to wake up, people. It's not just about the Liberals, and it's not just about the year 2000. Rewarding loyal voters has been a mainstay of politics since democracy was invented by the ancient Greeks. US President Andrew Jackson fired 20 per cent of the federal civil service when he came to power in 1828 and replaced them with loyal supporters. Former Nova Scotia premier John Savage had to resign because he refused to reward his supporters with patronage appointments.

So when the PM doesn't even see anything wrong with single-handedly funnelling \$200,000 to build a fountain in Shawinigan, sure, we can cry patronage.

But let's remember why we're doing this: not because it's wrong but because the media have prompted it. Because they've told us what the news is, and what we should be outraged about. Unless we look to alternative news sources part of the time, we'll never know the real picture, and Rupert Murdoch and Conrad Black will continue to control how we perceive our world.



# "Their Only Crime was Driving While Black"

*Almost 30 years later their story remains untold*

By TAL PINCHEVSKY

On May 2, 1973, three former members of the New York City chapter of the Black Panther Party were stopped on the New Jersey Turnpike for what was filed as a "faulty tail-light."

Shortly after, a shoot-out ensued during which Werner Foster, a state trooper, was killed. Along with Foster, Zayd Malik Shakur, one of the former Black Panthers in the vehicle, was also shot and killed. The two remaining ex-Panthers in the car, Sundiata Acoli and Assata Shakur, were wounded.

Following the shoot-out, both Assata and Sundiata were convicted for the murder of the state trooper and other related charges, and were sentenced to life in prison. This is how Sundiata Acoli's legal advisors recount that night's events.

Few could have fathomed the series of events that would follow this conviction. The result of these events would become one of the great and untold civil rights stories of our time.

## THE STORY OF SUNDIATA

As for Sundiata Acoli, he remains in a New Jersey prison to this day. In 1994, Sundiata appeared before the New Jersey State Parole Board and was denied parole and assigned a new parole hearing in 2006. According to his attorneys, Joan Gibbs and Florence Morgan, up until his

most recent parole hearing Sundiata had maintained a "charge free" record for eight years and had been given outstanding educational and work reports.

In denying Sundiata his opportunity for parole, the parole board concluded that there remained a substantial likelihood that Sundiata would commit another crime if released. The reasoning behind this conclusion was Sundiata's affiliation with the Black Panther Party and characterization of himself as a "political prisoner."

Sundiata's state of affairs is summarized by Gibbs and Morgan: "Sundiata is being held in prison because of his and his supporters' First Amendment-protected beliefs and activities," they write in an online letter published on the internet. "The transcript of Sundiata's telephonic parole hearings and the board's decisions also make clear that the parole board has predetermined to deny Sundiata his parole in violation of his right to due process of law. No evidence exists that if released on parole, Sundiata, who is now 62 years old, will embark on a life of crime. The purpose of prison, except in the instances in which barbaric punishment of death is imposed, is supposed to be rehabilitation, not torture and revenge."

## ASSATA

While Sundiata Acoli has served what many consider an unjust sentence for some 26 years, the fate of Assata Shakur has taken

a miraculous turn over that same period.

Like Sundiata, Assata Shakur was sentenced to life in prison for the events that transpired on that fateful May evening. The sentence imposed upon Sundiata and Assata stemmed from a trial many disputed. Assata had been serving a life sentence in a New Jersey prison when, in 1979, she escaped and then sought political asylum in Cuba. Active asylum was granted by Cuba and Assata remains there to this day.

Assata Shakur recounts these events in a letter addressed to the Pope during his visit to Cuba two years ago. In the letter, Assata states, "To make a long story short, I was captured in New Jersey in 1973, after being shot with both arms held up in the air, and then shot again from the back. I was left on the ground to die and when I did not, I was taken to a local hospital where I was threatened, beaten, and tortured. In 1977 I was convicted in a trial that can only be described as a legal lynching. In 1979 I was able to escape with the aid of some of my fellow comrades. I saw this as a necessary step, not only because I was innocent of the charges against me, but because I knew that in the racist legal system in the United States I would receive no justice. I was also afraid that I would be murdered in prison. I later arrived in Cuba where I am currently living in exile as a political refugee."

The reasoning behind this gross misappropriation of power, according to this same letter, lies in illegal government operation known as COINTELPRO. This US government initiative is described by Assata as "a program that was set up by the Federal Bureau of Investigation to eliminate all political opposition to the US government's policies, to destroy the Black Liberation Movement in the US, to discredit activists, and to eliminate potential leaders." As a Black Panther and a Black Liberation Army leader during the early 1970s, Assata Shakur certainly would have been a target of this FBI COINTELPRO operation.

In a conversation with The Daily, Herman Ferguson, a colleague of Assata's, friend of the late Zayd Malik Shakur, and a political exile in his own right, shared his impression of the young, strong Assata Shakur. As Ferguson says, "I remember her as a young girl back in the sixties when she became active with the Panther group. I left the country and became a fugitive just as she was becoming an activist. While I was in exile in Guyana for 19 years, I always heard about how highly revered she was by the Black Panther Party."

## BREAKING THE STORY

While the story has received little to no attention by any media outlets—alternative or otherwise—the face of this story changed somewhat two years ago when Ralph Penza from NBC news in New York did a highly publicized story on Assata Shakur. The two-part expose mounted to three and a half minutes, of which Penza actually occupied more time on screen than Assata.



Assata Shakur escaped from prison and fled to Cuba in 1979.

The story disrupted the Assata cause and has made certain proponents of this cause far more reluctant to speak with the media. One such example of this is Sofia Buchari, a friend and former colleague of Assata Shakur, who told the Daily, "Since the disrupting piece on Assata on NBC, there are not a lot of people that will talk about Assata, and now she is not giving interviews."

In one of her most recent interviews, Assata Shakur recounted how she responded to Cubans asking about her background. Regarding this question, Assata says "I tell the truth. I say I'm a political prisoner from the United States who is living here in exile. That's not uncommon. There are many people here from Chile, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and other places who have been granted political asylum. Cubans understand that theirs is a country that provides sanctuary for people fleeing oppression."

Referring to his last conversation with Assata, around 1988 or 1989, Ferguson says, "We compared notes on our experiences in exile. We discussed what is going on in the United States. The only thing that we can do here for her is perhaps prove that her conviction is based on untruths and her career as an activist."

Key Martin, another former friend of Zayd Malik Shakur who has interviewed Assata Shakur in person, shared with The Daily what little is known of Assata and her escape from prison. Regarding the escape, Martin says, "No one is really talking about it. Mutula Shakur, Tupac's father, is in prison for her escape. He has been in prison

since 1986 on a conspiracy charge and the conspiracy includes the conspiracy to break Assata out of jail. I believe he and Silvia Baraldini were the only ones charged in her escape. And that was based on the testimony of a stooly and it later turned out that this stooly got off a murder rap in doing so."

Referring to Assata's new life in Cuba and the incident that forced her to flee, Martin says, "I don't know what job she has there. The Cubans have given her asylum and safeguarded her. I know she went to the university there. I was a good friend of Zayd and their only crime was driving while black. The passengers in their car were unarmed. So who shot the

slain officer? In my opinion, he was tried for his murder was a cover-up for the fact that these he was shot by the gun of a policeman. In the end, she was railroaded by an all-white jury in conviction that should never have happened."

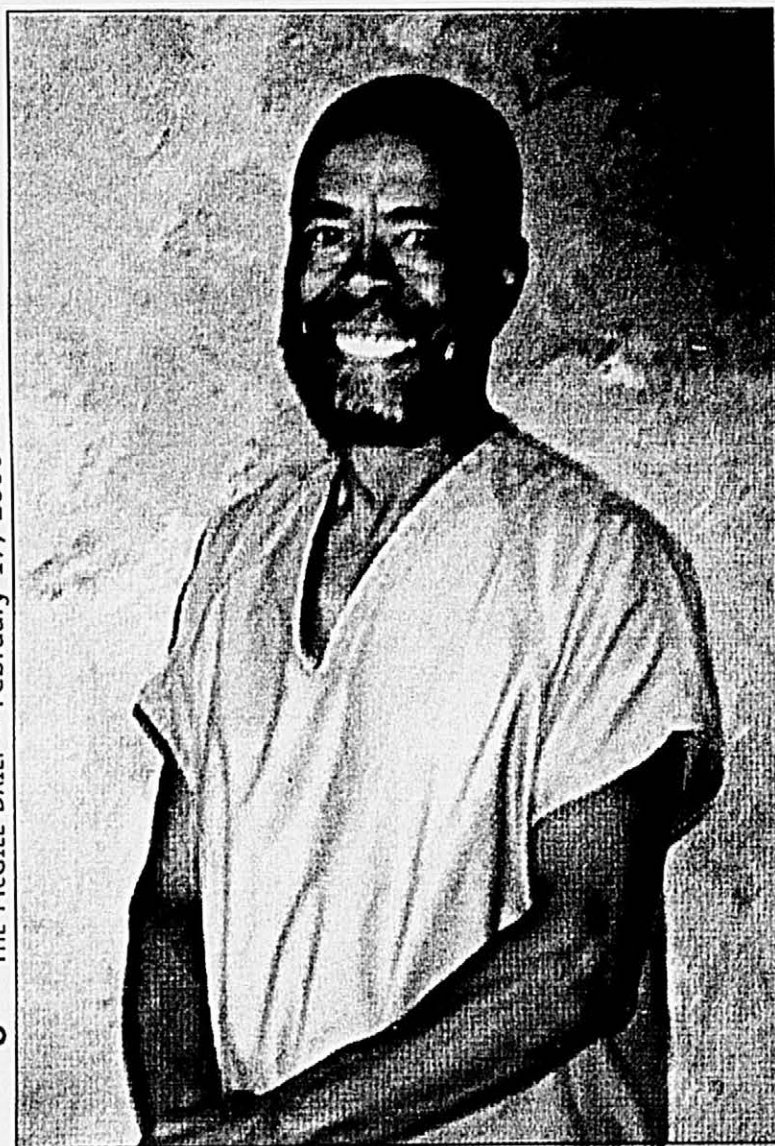


POEM FOR A FRIEND

For Sundiata Acoli's birthday last year Assata Shakur sent him a poem that, in a tragically serene way, brought the two of them back together. Part of the poem reads: "I remember your smile, bright as the sun's explosion, wide as the arms of Yemaya, Deep as a gushing well of kindness. Slow like the dawn of recognition, quick like the wit of observation, clear like the logic of common sense, I remember your smile."



Silvia Baraldini (centre) helped Assata escape.



Sundiata Acoli is serving a life sentence for a murder he says he didn't commit.



# Social Upheaval On the Horizon?

*Cynicism, low expectations among participants in Quebec Youth Summit 2000*

BY JULIEN LAPLANTE, DÉLIT FRANÇAIS  
TRANSLATED BY JASON CHOW AND JAMES YAP

Where in the world can one hope to reach a consensus on a multitude of different subjects – employment, education, social equality, unions, and business – in the same room?

In Quebec, of course, where the government has organized the Quebec Youth Summit. By assembling 70 youth organizations, the summit will attempt to create a dialogue between different players.

"The summit's principal objective is to foster the development of a more open, equitable Quebec, and one that will better integrate youth," explained the summit's official website.

The conferences, which will take place next week, will be structured around four main themes: employment, education, social equality, and "opening up to the world."

To make for an orderly and focused

agenda, the organizers have already conducted regional workshops during last few months to allow the public to voice their opinions.

However Eric Morin of the National Youth Committee, a sub-committee of the National Committee of Unions (CSN), decided only recently to participate in the summit. He was reluctant because of his experience with the pre-summit proceedings, which were supposed to allow youth to voice their message.

"There were certain groups which would have liked to speak, but they were not given the chance," Morin said.

The CSN announced this week its decision to participate at the summit, but said that it would refuse to discuss tax cuts or debt reduction.

"There are certain subjects that do not pertain to the Youth Summit, and those include macroeconomic," said Morin.

Daniel Baril, president of the Quebec Federation of University Students (FEUQ),

underlined similar sentiments.

"We do not want a summit about the economy," said Baril. "The funds should be used to help youth and it's because of that that we can have some important goals met, notably reinvestment for universities."

Student groups and unions do not want the private sector to impose their agenda. "The private sector gets a lot but gives nothing," Morin said.

The interaction between left-wing organizations and representatives from private industry are making it possible to talk on sensitive issues. Is it possible to talk about reinvestment in education, like the FEUQ wants, without touching on the the tax-cut and debt issues? According to the leftists it is.

But looking at the list of those invited, which includes members from the Quebec Chamber of Commerce and the Quebec Manufacturers Alliance, it seems that the ultimate goal is to identify what needs to be done so that youth are better equipped

for life, leaving room for tensions to flare.

The Quebec Workers' Federation (FTQ), which has yet to decide if it will send a representative, has said it expects few results to come out of the summit.

"First of all, we're not interested in going," said Jacques Théorêt, a spokesperson for the FTQ. "We're not naive, we don't expect to change the world."

Théorêt's opinion is shared by the Movement for the Right to Education (MDE), which was not invited by the government. This will not, however, prevent them from inviting themselves.

"We were one of the first organizations to oppose this summit, just like for the socioeconomic summit," says Mélissa Hamel, MDE's director of communications. "We will be there protesting, and hopefully we'll be able to impede the summit." The MDE is hoping to rally enough protesters to shut down completely all the summit's scheduled, "a little in the spirit of [the 1999 protests in] Seattle," Hamel declared.

The MDE believes that the deck is stacked against the student associations that will be attendance: FEUQ and the Quebec Federation of College Students (FECQ). "The invited parties were consulted in advance, consensus has been pre-established," asserts Hamel, recalling that the tuition freeze was granted largely because of the mass strike movement initiated by the MDE.

However according to Théorêt of the Quebec Workers Federation, the FTQ will not be held hostage by the government if it chooses to participate. "We can always walk out of the summit, which would hurt the government," he explains.

McGill's SSMU, which normally favours lobbying, has been granted observer status at the summit, and will be in attendance. SSMU President Andrew Tischler, however, is not overly enthusiastic about prospects for the summit: "I think it's a sham," he declared at last Thursday's SSMU meeting.

## THE MCGILL DAILY

# Literary 2000 Contest

COORDINATED BY BEN ERRETT AND  
CÉLINE HEINBECKER

The Daily is proud to announce the 2000 edition of the Daily Literary Contest. This year's contest is a revival of a proud Daily tradition from the 1940s, 1950s and early 1960s. Past winners of the contest have included Leonard Cohen and Irving Layton. The contest features three categories: poem, essay and short story.

### The Rules

All entries must be received by 5 pm on Friday, March 17, 2000 in the box in The Daily's office in Shatner B-03. The contest is open to all McGill students. All entries must be typed on 8.5x 11" paper. Essay entries must be no more than 1000 words, and may be on any topic. Short stories must be no more than

2000 words. Poems should not exceed 2 pages in length. Essays and short stories must be double spaced.

Entries should have a cover page with the following information: name, year and program, phone number, e-mail, and a brief biographical sketch to be published with winning entries.

### The Judging

Upon receipt, all entries will be coded and names will be removed.

The contest will be judged by members of both the McGill and Montreal literary community. McGill judges will include English professors Nathalie Cooke, Robert Lecker and Brian Trehearne. Other judges will be Adrian King-Edward, owner of The Word book-

store on Milton, Richard King, co-owner of Paragraphe bookstore, and Michael Harris, poetry editor for Vehicule Press.

### The Prizes

There will be a first, second, and third prize in each category, for a total of nine winners. All winners will have their entries published in the April 3 issue of The Daily. First prize winners will receive a \$25 gift certificate from Paragraphe books, a gift certificate for 5 beverages at the McGill Café, and a McGill Daily t-shirt. Second Prize winners will receive \$20 dollar gift certificates from the McGill University bookstore. Third prize winners will receive a selection of books donated by Vehicule Press and Chapters.

The following poem won first place in The Daily's 1954 Literary Contest:

### The Sparrows

BY LEONARD COHEN

Catching winter in their carved nostrils  
the traitor birds have deserted us,  
leaving only the dullest brown sparrows  
for spring negotiations.

I told you we were fools.

To have them in our games,  
but you replied:

They are only wind up birds  
who strut on scarlet feet  
so hopelessly far  
from our curled fingers.

I had moved to warn you,  
but you only adjusted your hair  
and ventured:

Their wings are made of glass and gold  
and we are fortunate  
not to hear them splintering against the sun.

Now the hollow nests  
sit like tumors or petrified blossoms  
between the wire branches  
and you, an innocent scientist,  
question me on these brown sparrows:  
whether we should plant our yards with breadcrumbs  
or mark them with black persistent crows  
whom we hate and stone.

But what should I tell you of migrations  
when in this empty sky  
the precise ghosts of departed summer birds  
still trace old signs?  
or of desperate flights  
when the dimmest flutter of a coloured wing  
excites all in our favourite streets  
to delight in imaginary spring?





Extreme right-wing leader Jörg Haider talks to the media in Montreal on Wednesday

# Jörg Haider Visits Montreal

*Media frenzy surrounds Austrian leader*

BY BEN ERRETT

Controversial Austrian leader Jörg Haider paid a surprise personal visit to Montreal yesterday, causing a local and national media frenzy. Haider was staying at the Ritz Carlton Hotel on Sherbrooke and Drummond, and by five o'clock reporters and cameramen were huddled by the entrance of the five-star hotel waiting for Haider's appearance.

Several reports also reported that Haider is expected in Toronto today.

Mark, an organizer for Anti-Racist Action Montreal who doesn't use his last name, said he was dismayed that Haider was even permitted in Canada.

"His mere presence in the country is not something Canada customs should be proud of."

Moshe Ronen, National President of the Canadian Jewish Congress, agreed. "It's probably not right to

bar him from entering this country," Ronen told CBC News yesterday. "But I think what is important is that Canadians speak up and tell Mr. Haider that he is not welcome here, that his views are not welcome here."

Haider's Freedom Party garnered enough support in an Austrian election earlier this month to become part of a coalition government. His rise has focused international attention on the country and Haider. The Austrian leader's hardline views against immigration and statements downplaying Nazi atrocities have been called reminiscent of fascism under the Third Reich.

Canada has joined a number of countries in the international community in cutting diplomatic ties with Vienna. Earlier this week, members of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra said they would refuse to travel to Vienna to play a number of concerts slated for next month.

The Austrian Embassy in Ottawa denied knowing about Haider's visit, saying that they only heard about it from the media.

"I know absolutely nothing about this beyond what you people have told us," a spokesman for the embassy said.

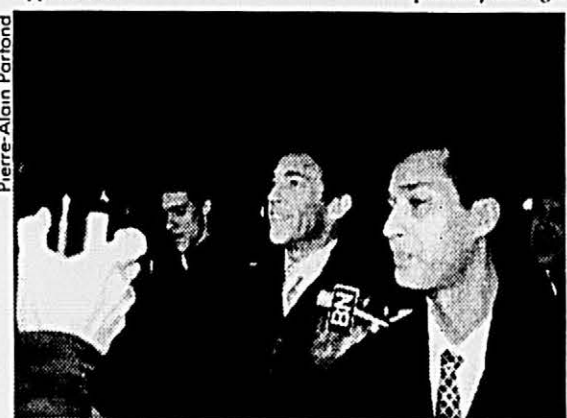
"Mr. Haider does not inform us of his personal travel plans."

Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy has said that he had no notification of the visit either.

"He certainly has a right to visit," Axworthy told politicians yesterday.

"But it was not done on our invitation nor was it apparently done with the knowledge of the Austrian government."

Several media reports yesterday said that Haider requested a tour of the Montreal Holocaust Museum, but was denied access but a spokeswoman for the Holocaust Museum said that no such request had been made to them.



Pierre-Alain Parfond



Pierre-Alain Parfond

# McGill Music Faculty Denied Funding

*New music building omitted from Ministry's List of Projects*

BY DAVID PODGORSKI

After five years of promises, The Quebec Ministry of Education has omitted a proposed new building for the McGill Faculty of Music from their agenda, putting the project on hold indefinitely. This startling omission comes as nothing less than a slap in the face to a Faculty whose resources remain drastically underfunded.

"The government assured us it would be put on their list," said McGill Principal Bernard Shapiro. "[The Music Faculty] feels a desperate need for the facilities."

The list in question is the Ministry of Education's Capital Spending Projects for the year 2000. The new building was initially proposed in 1995, and a substantial amount was put forward for its completion. Originally, the government was expected to have paid half the cost of the new edifice, or fifteen million dollars. The remaining funds were to have come from the private sector.

The current music building, at 555 Sherbrooke, was originally designed for a faculty of five hundred students, and is the largest and fastest-growing music department in Canada. There are currently over six hundred students taking music courses there, in addition to approximately one thousand students enrolled at the McGill Conservatory of Music - located in the same building.

"The government never gives a red light," said an irate Don MacLean, Associate Dean (Academic) of Music. "Either it hides behind the treasury or it

delays its response. In this case, after several years, the government finally gave its approval. We were given every indication that the project was moving forward."

The Ministry of Education was unavailable for comment at the time, and the Principal's Office is still awaiting their official response. Recent press releases reveal, however, that there is money available but is being allocated elsewhere. Last month, Education minister Francois Legault unveiled plans to spend \$2.2 million on a primary and secondary school gymnasiums in Saint-Esprit and Saint-Alexis-des-Monts, \$29 million on two primary schools, a secondary school, and a professional training centre in Blainville, and a \$7 million incentive to CEGEPs and universities to increase the number of students in information technology programs.

Dean of Music Richard Lawton stressed the urgent need for funding at a time when the music faculty is unable to house its students. "The question is one of timing," he emphasized. "I was optimistic even before I was dean... Now we have even had to decrease enrollment simply because of lack of space." Lawton claims the current strain on the building is taking its toll, as it is in use around the clock. A lack of floorspace, studios, library resources, classrooms, audio and computer equipment, and concert venues are all problems which plague the administration. Ironically, this decay even seems to be reflected in the structure itself, as the walls themselves are crumbling due to water damage. Lawton seems unable to explain the rationale for the government's

decision. "It's frustrating - [the capital projects plan] should have been released in April, but was delayed until January. Ideally it should be updated every year. I don't know what happens in the interim."

Students and faculty are hoping to sway the government's decision through a letter-writing campaign to Premier Lucien Bouchard. Forty music professors have already written to the premier's office, and it is estimated that four hundred students have since written to voice their disapproval. "The response has been very good," declared Sage Firman, music representative to SSMU. The president of every student association signed [a letter], and so did everyone on SSMU. This concept of a mythical music building that will never exist really translates into a negative attitude."

"I think it's ridiculous," agreed Leonie Wall, a music student who sent a letter to Bouchard. "To not include us when they said it was a major concern is nothing less than offensive." Some students are more tempered in their response. "Governments are more likely to fund faculties that produce concrete goods, rather than something like arts or music," argued Ben Kwong, another musician. "They want something to which they can attach a dollar figure."

But despite this setback, the music faculty is still confident in its ability to remain a world-class school. According to instrumentalist Katy McLoughlin, "No matter how much the government underfunds it, great music will still come out of the building. They could set fire to it and we would still be an excellent faculty."

# String of False Alarms Spark Ire, Not Fire

*Fatal New Jersey fire has residence officials wary of false alarms*

BY LEA JACOBSON

At approximately 4 o'clock in the morning of February 5, 200 residents of Gardner Hall were treated to the first of what would be a string of false fire alarms.

Over-sensitive panel sensors that were installed recently as a part of the fire safety upgrade project are being blamed for the rash of alarms that have seen upper residence students forced to evacuate their buildings nine times in the last two weekends.

"It's an awful pain," said one student who was forced to evacuate the building in his bathrobe during one of the false alarms. "It shouldn't be taking them so long to fix the system so that the whole building doesn't have to be evacuated every time someone boils water."

"I think people should be allowed to make peanut butter and jelly on toast at 4 in the morning without waking up 200 people," said a Gardner resident.

But Director of Residences Flo Tracy

says she has spoken with engineers and that the problem should be fixed this week.

"It is a matter of getting the sensitivity regulated... and of getting the new system operational," she said. "We should be able to burn our toast without false alarms going off."

She says the concern now is the impression that many residents have when an alarm goes off that it's probably false. "It is important that we don't have people thinking that there is no need to leave," she said.

Much of the administration's anxiety has emerged in light of the recent dormitory fire last month at Seton Hall University near South Orange in New Jersey. Prior to the fire that killed three students and hospitalized 58 students, false alarms were common at the residence. A New Jersey newspaper reported that the students at Seton Hall had grown accustomed to sleeping through fire alarms, and even went to such lengths as to hide under beds or in closets to avoid being forced out of the building by residence assistants.

Though these concerns have been voiced in residence since the alarms began, many students have begun to ignore the bells.

"Last night we were watching The Simpsons when the fire alarm went off, and we wanted to see who was going to die [on the show], so we just closed the door to the TV room while everyone else went outside," reported one student, "and everytime I come back in from [an alarm] I see people in the hallways, and you can tell that they were not just outside."

Other students assure that they will continue to evacuate during the fire drills, but do so reluctantly. "I don't see how I have any choice," said one.

"Yeah, I'll keep leaving," said another, "but only because I've heard they can fine us if we don't."

And Tracy says that residence officials are encouraging residents not to take any chances. "Please leave; please don't take a risk," she said. "It's better safe than sorry, and we never know."



# Scene Locally

BY TYLER HARGREAVES

**NAME:** Hugh Segal, President of the Institute for Research on Public Policy. He ran for the leadership of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada in 1999.

**PLACE:** L'Orchidée Chine Restaurant

**TOPIC:** Gangsta Rap

**Daily:** Gangsta rap is a modern, urban phenomenon that often uses crude language that objectifies women and encourages violence. Is this new form a continuation of new music overturning old conventions, such as rock-and-roll in the Fifties, or something different?

**Hugh Segal:** I think that it is actually quite different. I think it relates to an urban cultural reality that is, in some respects, a product of disinterest and neglect on the part of public policy. It is a legitimate pluralistic expression of a cultural view which has legitimacy and value. The fact that it is offensive only indicates that not all cultural expressions correspond to what conventional society is comfortable with. You wouldn't want to ever see it censored. You wouldn't want to see the state be negative on it because to do so would only be to create issues of fairness and justice around what are now simply questions of individual esthetic preference and judgement which in a pluralist society you don't want to diminish or dilute.

**Daily:** Does it have a negative influence on youth who listen to it?

**HS:** My own sense of young people is that they have the judgement and the balance to sort out what's of value and what's excessive. In the context of what's artistic, on occasion some things might strike some people as excessive and might strike others as quite appropriate. So I don't think that we should be running around protecting people's ears. That is not the kind of society I would want to live in because you get back to who decides whose ears need protecting and what they need to be protected from. And there is no appropriate answer to that so I'm glad to let the marketplace and individual taste determine what works and what doesn't. And I'd be deeply troubled by any intervention by regulatory bodies that diminished this particular mode of expression and its opportunity to be heard.

**Daily:** Can you envision a necessary point at which regulatory bodies would have to step in to limit it?

**HS:** We have some laws now around libel, profanity, and hate literature which apply to any and all expressions whether they be music or written. We also have the Charter of Rights which protects individuals' rights to free expression. But I think that you want to



Pierre-Alain Parfond

*Hugh Segal discusses General Tsao's chicken and Gangsta Rap*

have protections on both sides. You don't want to have a particular rule brought in for gangsta rap that might have not been used for *Lady Chatterly's Lover* many decades ago.

**Daily:** Gangsta rap originates in the US and there have been copycat groups here and in Europe. Do you see a specific reason for why this aggressive articulation has arisen in this way?

**HS:** It's a universal format and one that you can hear in parts of the Caribbean and in urban centres across the world where there is a concentration of people of Afro or Caribbean background. It is probably, in part, a reflection of what works as a cultural expression. And it reflects a particular circumstance which in many cases has been very very difficult and very very oppressive and very very negative. I think that also, in a more productive way, a desire for a particular group of our fellow Canadians to express themselves in a cultural frame of reference in which they are very very comfortable and which is very responsive to the particular reality in which they have lived and which is resonant in terms of the lives that they see around them. That is opposed to the official white version of life with which they may choose to disagree.

**Daily:** Would you buy a gangsta rap album for your daughter?

**HS:** I'm at a stage in life where my daughter makes her own choices. If I bought any album for my daughter she would determine immediately that it was the wrong kind of music. The corollary question is that if she and her buddies enjoyed gangsta rap and listened to it, would I be troubled about them as human beings or in terms of their judgement? The answer is: of course not. It is just one small facet of a large musical world that they have every right to enjoy.

**Daily:** Do you like it?

**HS:** I want to be clear. I

haven't heard much of it. What I have heard on occasion has struck me as very disengaged from the reality in which I live. But I can imagine that all kinds of things that I say or do could seem very disengaged from other people's reality.

**Daily:** So you are not passing judgement on it. You just think that it is a natural progression; there is no inherent evil in it and letting it go on is appropriate.

**HS:** Yeah, it's appropriate. I think that if someone were to say "I'm now going to cut an album of gangsta rap that is, in every single one of its cuts, going to glorify rape or violence against women" then I think that we would find ourselves in a different discussion. But, you know, as is the case with nudity in films, the issue is, is that a legitimate part of our artistic expression or is it being done for gratuitous, puerile reasons? And I think that people will have their own views on that. We have laws that engage at various levels and we don't have to create any new ones.

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a fight, who  
would win?**

*Read them and  
find out on page 7.*

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# Start Spreading the Word

Ian Ferrier talks to *The Daily* about his new book and album, *Montreal*, and the winter

BY ALEX AYLETT

There couldn't have been a better day to interview Montreal poet Ian Ferrier. He is a self-described winter poet, and as I stumbled over to St. Laurent boulevard through a February blizzard, lines from his new album kept surfacing in my mind:

WHAT IS IT ABOUT THE SNOW THIS YEAR  
THAT IT SEEMS THAT IT WILL NEVER END?

"The only thing that allows me to survive as a writer is the fact that it gets cold here." He smirks, and laughs as he says this. It is surprising to hear him speak. In person, his voice is softer and younger than the rumbling tenor of his recordings. For all this week's weathermen and "blowing snow warnings," a much colder winter comes through Ferrier's words.

*Exploding Head Man*, his new CD and book set, distills winter down to its deepest nights and most chilled images. Thankfully though, there is always warmth to be found in the storm through open doorways and passionate embraces. "The heat in the face of all this winter we live through, that's part of what drives this place," he said of Montreal. It is equally true of his poetry.

AND IN THIS ICEBOUND HOUSE I'M LISTENING  
TO THE RUMBLE OF SNOWPLOUGHS  
SUCKING OXYGEN AND FUEL OUTSIDE MY WINDOW.  
AND IN THE HEAT OF THIS BEDROOM  
EVERYBODY'S GOT SOMEONE IN THEIR MOUTH:

A sensuous opposition between our inner and outer worlds runs through most of the seventeen poems on *Exploding Head Man*. Performed by Ferrier, the tracks range from haunting to comic. Backed by a great band, including guitarist Sam Shalabi (of Molasses), some of the pieces are even catchy. This, I think, would please Ferrier. Co-founder of the Wired On

Words record label, he is bent on appropriating "catchy," and any other words that usually mark out the territory of pop music. It is time, he says, for the greater popular consumption and appreciation of poetry.

"I have the greatest respect for academic environments, but I think that there is an important place for poetry outside those walls. I'm trying to make a place for it in everyday life. I think that is where it is

McGill's CKUT has been one of Wired On Words' major supporters, helping Ferrier challenge the music industry on its own turf. So far, so good. Millennium Cabaret, a CD anthology released last year, topped college radio charts in Vancouver and Montreal. Ferrier is gleefully sardonic about his recent successes. "It's pretty remarkable for poets. We beat out the music - hurrah! Oh, I shouldn't say that, the musicians will kill me," Ferrier jokes.

sing, the music can be a crutch. You can be saying something ridiculous like 'doo-ahhh, doo-ahhh, she's my baby' and it will sound fine because the tune is so seductive. That's the kind of thing I want to get away from. On their own, the words have to be much stronger." From a poet that can make the word "machinery" sound like a dump-truck unloading gravel, the power of words becomes self-evident.

than Ian Ferrier and the Exploding Head Band, Alexis O'Hara, Fortner Anderson, Corey Frost, Catherine Kidd, and Jake Brown will all be performing.

The launch also marks the extension of Montreal's words to the world. Recorded by CBC radio, the event coincides with the debut of *Speakeasy*, an internet poetry zine featuring works in Realaudio by many of the evening's performers. It can be accessed through the Wired On Words website at [www.wiredonwords.com](http://www.wiredonwords.com).



Ian Ferrier and his band will be launching *Exploding Head Man* this Friday at Jailhouse Rock Café

most powerful; you're sitting in your car, or you're studying at night and all of a sudden you hear this voice...And you don't categorize it, you just listen to it. That is when a good work is capable of really changing you. Ultimately I'd like to see this kind of work being used by any radio-station. So you could pick up the latest Madonna, and the latest poem, and play them back-to-back."

Despite the jest, the competition is real, both in general and within Ferrier's work. He admits that the pieces on *Exploding Head Man* walk a tightrope between music and text. Also, because he is aiming at a large audience, it must be tempting to follow Leonard Cohen, and start crooning. It is a temptation he wants to resist, "I'm more interested in the power of the words themselves. When you

MACHINERY THAT WOKE THOSE CONSTELLATIONS  
CIRCLING IN THE WATER HIGH ABOVE MY HEAD  
THE GOLD FISH APPROACHING THE SUN  
GLITTERING IN MY THOUGHTS

Montreal is becoming recognized as the North American capital of spoken-word. This Friday's launch of *Exploding Head Man* is an opportunity to catch some of the scene's elder statesmen. Other

THIS IS THE BREATH OF THE LAST WORDS  
SPOKENBUBBLING UP THE FROZEN EVIDENCE  
OF LOVE  
LIKE NITROGEN IN GLASS

Trying to bring the interview to an interesting close, I looked down my list and stopped at one of the riskier questions. "What are you trying to do by writing poetry?" I asked. It's not a bad question really, but sometimes it can come off as too direct, or too broad. Ferrier shifted in his seat, and brushed some of his dark hair from his forehead. His eyes flicked away from me, staring intensely off to the side of the table. A door slammed. I became uneasy. And then looking up and smiling, he replied. "The sense of saying something that rings in your head forever. That's what I'm shooting at. Poetry has the power to change the way you imagine your world. If you are asking about what I ideally do, it would be that. That is what the best poems have done for me. They've made me see beauty, power, and mystery where maybe I didn't see so much before."

The *Exploding Head Man* launch is this Friday at Jailhouse Rock Café (30 Mt. Royal West.) Doors open at 8pm. Entrance is 5\$ or 15\$ including the CD book set. The CD book is also available at the Word, Cheap Thrills, Noise Records, and Mojo.

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Pikes, Hugh Segal, and  
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...and the same paper  
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## EVENTS

### Thursday, February 17

Jody Anker and Friends will play at the The Artishow, 4873 St Laurent, 9 pm, \$4.

### Friday, February 18

"Finding Peace Amidst Civil War in Colombia," a lecture by Steve Law, will be held in Leacock 132 at 10:30 am.

### Saturday, February 19

CKUT presents BOOM, featuring many CKUT artists, at 8:30 pm at World Beat Club, 1590 St.-Laurent.

Anti-Nazi Rally to protest the inclusion of Jörg Haider's Freedom Party in the Austrian coalition. Saturday February 19th, 15h at 1350 Sherbrooke Ouest coin Crescent.

### Tuesday, February 22

Absolutely no school today. You are free to enjoy yourselves. Proceed to the lower field for McGill Daily Appreciation rally. Free money will be available. No, not really.

### Wednesday, February 23

"The Hidden World of Flies: The various habitats of flies and some of their very strange habits." Dr. Terry Wheeler, Department of Natural Resource Sciences, Redpath Museum, 7:30 pm. In con-

junction with the Montreal Field Naturalist's Club.

### Thursday, February 24

Benefit for Anti-Racist Action. Performances by piebald, the damn personals and akiata at the Jailhouse at 20h. \$6

### Friday, February 25

Montreal International Music Initiative (MIMI) will hold the New Artist Showcase featuring Les Marnottes Aplaties, Line 3, The Undercovers, and Delta 666. At the Jailhouse Rock Café, 30 Mont-Royal W. Tickets are available at the Jailhouse, Kerozen, L'Oblique, and C'Dement

### Saturday, February 26

Pro-Can Theatre presents, "THE SHOW", a spoof on today's TV Talkshows, written/directed by Randi Lauren Cousineau. Saturday & Sunday February 26-27 at 20h30, Rosedale-Queen Mary United Church, Main Sanctuary, 6870 Terrebonne, NDG. \$5.00 donation suggested.

### Volunteers Needed

The Montreal Sexual Assault Centre is in urgent need of volunteers. Phone Anne Heenan at 934-0345, ext. 452.



# The Realms of Perception and Normalcy

Arts NDG exhibit showcase features four emerging artists

BY COLIN GEORGE

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Another notable artist is Genevieve Chicoine who is displaying two contrasting types of work. The first is a pair of sombre, intense photos entitled "La Pleureuse," each portraying a body in an awkward, anguished position. The pictures are blotched with a metallic, corroded patina that adds reso-



"Let's see who blinks first"

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The work of Alvin McIntyre juxtaposes the familiarity of the body with striking, odd colours – a technique that complements his effortless, expressive line drawings. Two of his pieces are simple drawings of bodies, lightly shaded in blue or yellow. Two others are accentuated figures on red and black backgrounds that both strengthen and isolate the forms.

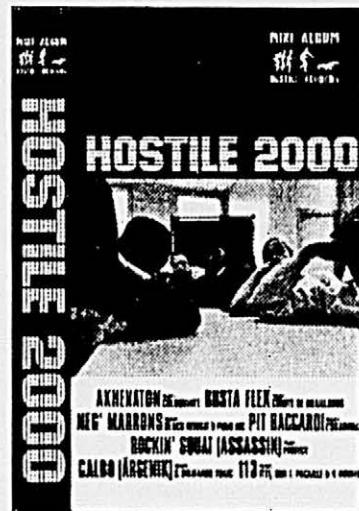
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Although most of the work was gorgeous, I have to say that Suzie Pilon and Peter Baumgartner's work came across as bland. Pilon's series of five drab prints entitled "Reflexion" lacked real inspiration, and Baumgartner's "5 moments of Libbey, 1985" seemed posed and flat. Furthermore, Patrick McDonnell's piece entitled "Rouge," an acrylic painting of a man bent over against a bright red background was not very impressive. If the artist's intent was to be garish and unpleasant, he succeeded. If that wasn't his goal, well, the medium is probably to blame.

Finally, anyone who goes to this exhibit just to see nudity won't be disappointed. Apart from being technically well done, and visually appealing, etc., François Brunelle's "Portrait" flaunts probably the most perfect breasts that anyone has ever gawked at while trying to seem cultured and artistic.

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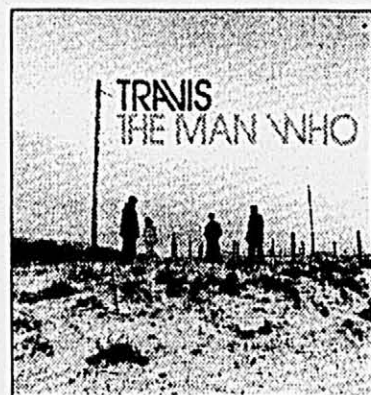
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*Hostile 2000* stays goal-oriented from beginning to end, elevating underground hip hop into the light for everyone to see, hear, and feel. This album is laced with pure, uncut hip hop that comes through rough and raw, bringing out its realism.

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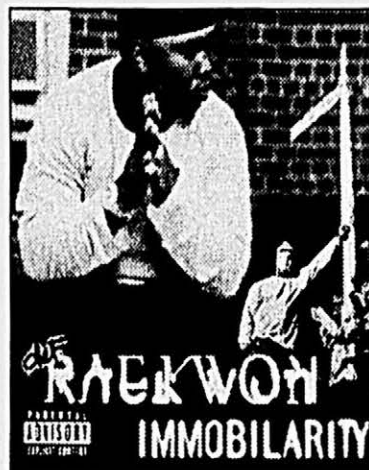
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"The Chef" as he is known, is firmly focused on attaining success as a solo artist and aims to surpass the classic LP, *Only Built 4 Cuban Linx...*, which solidified him as a messenger of the "streets." *Immobility* displays Raekwon's growth as an artist in his move to disassociate himself from his fellow Wu-member, Ghostface Killa, and produce another classic LP on his own. The future's bright for this artist who continues to please rap lovers with a raw yet truthful tone of voice.

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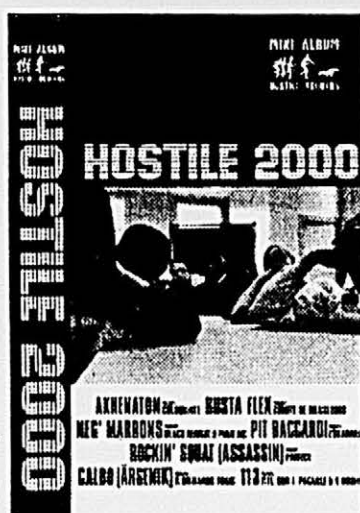
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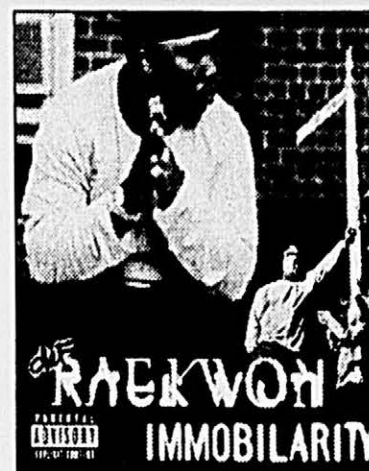
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## daily classifieds

Ads may be placed through the Daily Business Office, Room B-07, University Centre, 9h00-14h00. Deadline is 14h00, two working days prior to publication. McGill Students & Staff (with valid ID): \$4.75 per day, 3 or more consecutive days, \$4.25 per day. General Public: \$6.00 per day, or \$5.00 per day for 3 or more consecutive days. Extra charges may apply, prices include applicable GST or PST. Full payment should accompany your advertising order and may be made in cash or by personal cheque (for amounts over \$20 only). For more information, please visit our office or call 398-6790. WE CANNOT TAKE CLASSIFIED ADS OVER THE PHONE. PLEASE CHECK YOUR AD CAREFULLY WHEN IT APPEARS IN THE PAPER. The Daily assumes no financial responsibility for errors, or damages due to errors. Ad will re-appear free of charge upon request if information is incorrect due to our error. The Daily reserves the right not to print any classified ad.

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Reiko Waisglass



Isabelle Fahmy and Natasha Szuber in harmony at the Jailhouse Rock Café last week

# Pigeon-Holed With Success

## McGill band strikes balance between music and academics

BY REIKO WAISGLASS

When Natasha Szuber and Isabelle Fahmy started a band in Grade 7, they stood out from the kids starting punk groups and AC/DC cover bands. Instead, they nurtured skills playing Indigo Girls cover tunes and performing live at local talent shows and walk-a-thons.

Their commitment through the ensuing 10 years brought them to where they are now — a folk-rock band called Pigeon-Hole, now gaining exposure and respect throughout the Montreal music scene.

In 1997, fresh out of CEGEP, Pigeon-Hole won a battle of the bands contest at a bar on the West Island, giving them \$1500 of recording time at L.A. Records. The winnings were enough to record their first album, *Natural Descent*, which was released in 1998.

Since the release of *Natural Descent*, Szuber and Fahmy have been joined by a number of guest artists — drummers, violists, other vocalists, and at their latest gig,

a saxophone player. For the last eight months, Pigeon-Hole has consisted of Szuber and Fahmy sharing lead vocals with Szuber on guitar, Adam Blinick on bass, and Wade Manricks on drums.

There is no doubt that Pigeon-Hole is making their way into the limelight. Their venue credits include gigs at Arti Show, The Yellow Door, Jailhouse Rock Café, Cabaret, Metropolis, and Edge Fest '98, among others. They've also secured opening spots for big names like Jim Cuddy of Blue Rodeo, 54:40, Kinnie Starr, and Andy Stochansky.

While their luck with gigs and good exposure couldn't be better, Pigeon-Hole's success is being held back by one major factor: school. Szuber, Fahmy, and Blinick are all McGill students battling degrees in physiology, education, and literature, while Manricks is at Concordia studying economics. Szuber admits that the band is "willing to take things further if the opportunity arises," but for the moment, "it's hard to take anything aside from school-work too seriously."

Despite 10 years of experience, Pigeon-Hole still manages to look like a bunch of high school kids, albeit extremely talented ones, jamming in the basement of their suburban home. With surprisingly little showmanship, Pigeon-Hole modestly enjoys their music and the applause with a quiet, almost nervous, stage presence.

This is not to say they lack character. It's not often you see a band led by two vocalists equally sharing the spotlight. Fahmy's warm tone and Szuber's somewhat cooler sound harmonize well while remaining unique and identifiable.

With influences like Joni Mitchell, Suzanne Vega, and Ani DiFranco, Pigeon-Hole fits nicely into a folk-rock box. Playing original songs with the occasional cover, Pigeon-Hole jams on up-beat, catchy tunes that are highlighted by Szuber's impressive guitar skills and Blinick's dexterity on his upright electric bass. With more shows and a new album in the near future, I suggest you check them out while they're still indie so you can say, "I knew them when..."

# Philip Glass: Love Him or Hate Him

## Piano virtuoso to play Theatre Misonneuve

BY CHARLES ROY

If math could be heard, it would sound like a Philip Glass composition. Just as in mathematics, where the most juvenile of ideas can hide complicated schema and formulae, Glass's music often contains layer upon layer of rhythmic complexity, beautifully interwoven to achieve elegance and simplicity.

Between February 24th and 26th, Theatre Misonneuve will host a live performance by Glass and his orchestra of his soundtracks to the Godfrey Reggio films *Koyaanisquatsi*, *Powaqqatsi*, and the world premiere of *Anima Mundi*.

Most famous for his work composing operas and film scores (including the one for *The Truman show*), Glass's expertise and cutting-edge musical ideas extend far beyond these two domains into symphonic, chamber, and even rock-style music. Not surprisingly, the list of musicians and artists who count Philip Glass as one of their major influences is vast and far-reaching, and includes such names as Brian Eno, Pink

Floyd, and Jean-Michel Basquiat.

Glass has led an exciting life. After completing musical training at Julliard in New York City, he studied in Paris under Nadia Boulenger. In Paris, a film-maker approached the young Glass and asked him to transcribe some Ravi Shankar film music for French musicians. Listening to Shankar's additive and circular rhythm techniques was a revelation for Glass.

Finding the conventions of Western European rhythms too claustrophobic, Glass finally escaped Europe and headed for Asia and North Africa. It was during these trips that the composer finally found his voice.

Blending beautiful cyclic rhythms and East Indian ragas with the mathematical patterned regiments of Western styles, Glass managed to

create rhythmic complexity unlike most westerners had ever heard. The incessant layering of rhythm upon rhythm in his early work created a bewildering effect which is both hypnotic and frenzied. Audiences of his early performances often left the concert halls dishevelled and exhausted, but elated, as if they had just spent two hours sitting in the middle of a syncretized cyclone of swirling technicolor numbers.

Glass rejected serialism and the conventional 12-tone composition style of his contemporaries and sought new methods of

expression. He formalized a style which has since been dubbed "minimalism." The technique is fairly simple in theory, but requires a trained mathematical mind to execute properly. It involves the slow rhythmic and harmonic development of one or two simple melodies, or "cells," played over and over again. These



"cells" are calculated and then have others layered on top of them and even added to each end. There is no limit to the number of cells in a composition, nor are there restrictions to their length and rhythm. In other words, the recipe for minimalism is to add one cup of melody and a pinch of math to 12 litres of rhythm and orchestration. Mix vigorously. Salt to taste.

Since Glass' emergence onto the musical scene, his work has been varied and has always left his audiences guessing. In 1983 he composed the film score for *Koyaanisquatsi*, which translates as *Life out of Balance*. The film has won awards all around the world, due in no small part to the brilliance of Glass' score. Never one to be limited to a single genre, Glass has also produced rock and electronica albums which beg both the label "crossover" and the question of what will come next.

Philip Glass will be playing from February 24 to the 26 at Theatre Misonneuve. For information call 790-ARTS



# Rave On!

*Mireille Silcott's Rave America is an analysis of the raver subculture, its history, and its future*

BY JOSH KIRSHENBLAT

"If I can say I'm perfect about anything, I have perfect timing." Explains author Mireille Silcott over a coffee at Euro Deli on St. Laurent boulevard.

"I got into the club life in around 1987-88, when I was 13 to 14, and I just watched the whole thing."

Silcott's involvement in the burgeoning house scene, which rose from the ashes of disco and led to the explosion of the rave scene, provided the inspiration for her first book, *Rave America*. *Rave America* is the North American rave scene's first history book, a book perfect for ravers of all ages as well as those with a passing interest in rave or the youth culture of the 90s. After a brief history lesson, it takes the reader on a trip to four cities or regions with their own distinct influence on North American rave, including the Gay Circuit.

"When I was first approached to write the book, I thought I'm gonna do the history of house. Nobody's done that. So I started researching and I got so bored. So bored! I just spent the last four years writing about house and I didn't really get to write about rave that often, because it's not the type of thing that gets written about because it's not 'cool' enough, or not 'smart' enough, or whatever. So then I said 'I'm gonna skip all that and I'm gonna go straight to rave.'"

Silcott, aged 26, went to San Francisco in 1997, one of the first cities in North America to have a real rave scene. In San Francisco she had such a good time that she decided to write a book about the American rave scene.

"Nobody's written a book about American rave because they don't think it's worthy of the dissection. Well I do. So I said 'Okay, I'm gonna write a book about the stuff that nobody thinks a book should be written about.'"

And out of this endeavour emerged *Rave America*. Silcott's next destination was Milwaukee, where she found the opposite of the San Francisco scene, which makes up the most interesting chapter of the book. While San Francisco's scene was about love, unity, and generally going back to the hippie ideals, Milwaukee's scene was harder. Milwaukee's ravers liked harder, faster, meaner music, and preferred acid to ecstasy, which led them to incorporate Satanism into their raves.

"I knew that Milwaukee had a real hard core, like the German hard core, scene. I didn't know the extent of it. I didn't know about the Satanism. I just happened upon that stuff when I was there. I was there for a week, and it was one of the spookiest, most interesting weeks of my life."

Research on the topic also led Silcott to sunny Florida, to check out the scene in Orlando. As the book mentions, Orlando quite possibly had the biggest problem with drugs and drug-related deaths of any city in North America, but the scene was also revolutionary.

"Orlando was one of the only places in the US that created its own rave sound that

went with its rave scene. And again I didn't know about the deaths and the crazy kids and all that stuff."

Toronto is Canada's only representative in the book, and also one of the biggest rave scenes in North America, especially for jungle music.

"If you actually examine the book on a very superficial level, I actually view the trajectory of all different types of rave music and it's done chronologically. I needed jungle. There wasn't a single city in the US that had a vibrant jungle scene, and Toronto was right there, and I knew they had the biggest jungle scene."

Silcott also included the Gay circuit, not really a rave scene, but one that shares some similarities. "They travel on different arteries, but never quite meet. I thought it made an interesting contrast, how the same culture becomes different with gay and with mainly straight people," she explained between sips of cappuccino.

To make this year-long trip, Silcott had to dip into her own finances.

"I put 10,000 of my own dollars into writing the book. Once I got into it, it was this crazy whirlwind and I couldn't stop. I think many journalists would have chosen to write the book without travelling to every

place, but after having done it, I couldn't see having written this book in the same way."

So out of all the places Silcott went, what was her favourite? After thinking for a bit, Silcott's eyes lit up and she answered.

to take more of an interest in these American teenagers. My outlook on American youth has been forever changed. I'm not surprised about the Columbine shooting. I would have gone mental.

There's this strange shroud of 'have a nice day-isms,' but the underbelly is so dark and weird. Nobody's really happy. Culture shock! But the kids were so wonderful. They opened their hearts and their houses. They were so happy that somebody was in Orlando, thinking that their scene was important."

But there is an air of cynicism in *Rave America* about the state of rave in America. Silcott says that the one thing that all these scenes have in common is their quick decline, due to deaths at raves.

"In a way, rave is a culture of extremism. Once you're dealing with those types of behaviour, you know drug taking and debauchery, there is going to be some downfall. That being said, the downfall that I write about in the book doesn't even come close to the amount of joy that people got out of the scene. There's one person who dies, which is horrible, but there's hundreds of thousands that didn't."

Rave, like any other culture, especially youth culture is bound to have some deaths; it's the lack of education as well as overexposure in the media that lead to the distorted picture of raves and drug-related deaths at raves. Having said

that, Silcott also believes that there really can be no separation of the rave scene and drugs.

"The drugs created the scene to a certain extent. It's not all about the music. There's no getting around that. The entire act of raving was created because ecstasy was such a euphoric thing. It couldn't be contained in small venues. People wanted to go out in the middle of fields and do ridiculous things. And the music has followed suit."

Silcott sees a mixed bag regarding the future of rave. She says that some good things are evolving and some bad.

"The drug of the future is crystal meth. And ecstasy is a real fun house compared to crystal meth, when dealing with addiction. Crystal meth is the fastest growing drug in North America. I don't think people need E now like they did when I was a teenager. When I was a teen it was recession. Kids needed a pick me-up, like E. Now they don't. When times are good, like now, the drugs people choose are often things like coke, and crystal is more like coke. So I wouldn't be surprised if crystal is the drug of the next 10 years."

Being a veteran of the rave scene, Silcott has a pretty good idea of where rave is going.

"I don't think it's gonna get bigger, but I don't think it's gonna get smaller. I think it's become an entrenched culture in North America. I think that if rave culture can latch onto the success that hip-hop is having now it will go a lot further. I think kids are gonna keep on drugging and partying, and this is just one more way to enjoy yourself on the weekend, which is fine, which is good. It's more than I expected eight years ago. I don't think rave is gonna die. And if it does it's just because it morphed into something else. It's evolved, just like disco did."



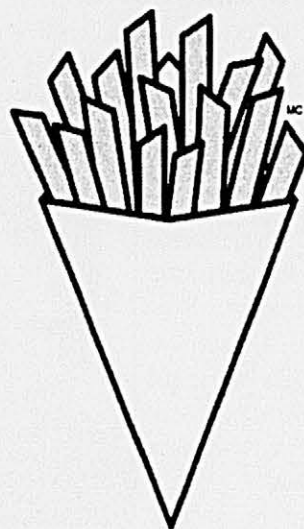
"I don't think rave is going to die" predicts Mireille Silcott, author of *Rave America*, in an interview with The Daily.

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